

I believe that America is called to lead the cause of freedom in this new century. I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their liberty. I believe that given the chance, they will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised by man. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

The 21st century will be liberty's century. By promoting freedom at home and abroad, we'll build a safer world and a more hopeful America. Over the next 4 years, we'll continue to work hard to reform systems that need to be changed so the American people can realize their dreams. We'll spread ownership and opportunity to every corner of this country. We'll pass the enduring values of our Nation on to a young generation. We'll continue to lead the world to make the world more free and peaceful.

You know, for these years—for all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time when we need firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that make us a great nation.

Four years ago—well, none of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. There were workers there in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember trying to console people as best I could. A guy grabbed me by the arm and he said, "Do not let me down." I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State asking for the vote, I said if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the dignity and the honor of the office to which I had been elected. With your help and hard work, I will do so for the next 4 years.

God bless. Thank you for coming. Thank you all very much. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. at Erie Veterans Memorial Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Pennsylvania State Senator Jane M. Earll; John R. Evans, member, Pennsylvania General Assembly; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President.

Proclamation 7807—Minority Enterprise Development Week, 2004 *September 4, 2004*

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Minority businesses are a key component of the American economy and reflect the values that make our country strong. They create opportunities for workers, provide goods and services to consumers, and strengthen our communities. During Minority Enterprise Development Week, we celebrate the achievements of minority businesses and emphasize our commitment to creating an environment in which these entrepreneurs can succeed.

All of America benefits from the strong and vibrant entrepreneurial spirit of our small business owners. By reducing taxes, encouraging investment, and removing obstacles to growth, my Administration has helped American businesses thrive and create nearly 1.7 million new jobs since August 2003. In addition, the number of Small Business Administration loans to minorities increased by 40 percent last year to a 50-year record level. And my fiscal year 2005 budget request includes a 21 percent increase in funding for the Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency, the largest increase in more than a decade.

To help provide sustainable outreach to minority enterprises, my Administration is working with the National Urban League to create an entrepreneurship network to further expand minority business ownership. With the help of government agencies, the private sector, and faith-based and community organizations, this network will include

one-stop centers for business training, counseling, financing, and contracting and will focus resources toward facilitating economic growth and enterprise in historically neglected areas.

More minorities own small businesses than ever before. That is good for our citizens and good for our country. Together, we can create an environment where entrepreneurs can flourish and everyone can realize the American Dream.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 5 through September 11, 2004, as Minority Enterprise Development Week. I call upon all Americans to celebrate this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities and to recognize the countless contributions of our Nation's minority enterprises.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 9.

Remarks in Parkersburg, West Virginia

September 5, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for taking time out of your Sunday to say hello. I appreciate you giving me the chance to come and tell you I want your vote. I believe you got to get out amongst the people and ask for the vote, and that's what I'm doing.

It's great to be back in West Virginia. It seems like I'm making a habit coming here. It ought to be clear to the people of this State that I want to carry West Virginia again. And it's clear to me, having been here a lot and seeing the enthusiasm and the size of the

crowds, with your help, we will carry West Virginia again.

I like this State. It's the home of really good people, beautiful scenery, and good hunting and fishing.

I wish Laura were traveling with me today. She's at home. She's been on the road a lot and—what a great speech she gave the other night in New York City. I'm really proud of her. She's a great mom, a wonderful wife, a terrific First Lady. I'm going to give you some reasons why I think you ought to put me back in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura will be First Lady for 4 more years.

I want to thank my friend Dick Cheney for working so hard. He's a great Vice President. I'm proud to be running with him. You know, he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. *[Laughter]* But I picked him because of his experience and judgment and because he can get the job done.

I want to thank Shelley Moore Capito for joining us, the fine Congresswoman from West Virginia. I appreciate you coming, Shelley Moore.

I want to thank your Mayor, Mayor Jimmy Colombo. Thanks for coming, Jimmy. I'm proud you're here. I'm honored you're here, sir. Next time I come back, we'll make sure you got a seat. *[Laughter]* But I'm proud you're here. Thank you, sir, for coming.

You know, there's a—like Jimmy, there's a lot of Democrats here in the crowd, and I want to thank you all for coming. See, my message is for everybody. A safer, stronger, better America is for every citizen of this country. I think old Zell Miller set a pretty good tempo for Democrats all across the country. He made it clear it's all right to come and support the Bush ticket. So if you're a Democrat and you're here, welcome. If you're an independent and you're here, welcome. If you're a Republican and you're here, thank you for your help.

I want to thank all those who are running for office who are here, but most importantly, I want to thank you all. I also want to thank the folks at Parkersburg High. I want to thank Ralph Board, the principal, and the students at Parkersburg High. I want to thank the community band that is here. Thank you all for coming.